

### ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides synchronous media playback and messaging between a host user and at least one guest user. The host user wishes to initiate a playback session in which the host user and guest users view a presentation that corresponds to a media file that is locally stored on each of the user's terminals. In order to initiate the playback session, the host user invites the guest users. If a guest user wishes to participate in the playback session, the guest user accepts the invitation. When the host user determines that the session should begin, based upon the acceptances from the guest users, the host user initiates the playback of the media file that is locally stored at each terminal. The present invention also supports playback actions that may occur during the playback session. The host user can terminate the playback session, and any of the guest users can withdraw during the playback session.